AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

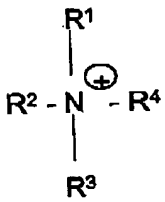
1. (Currently Amended) A method of imparting, controlling or improving the charge of an electrophotographic toner or developer, or an electret material, comprising the step of adding as a charge control agent a structured silicate salt wherein the cation is a low molecular weight, nonpolymeric organic cation or a combination of a low molecular weight, nonpolymeric organic cation with NH_4^+, H_3O^+, an alkali metal, an alkaline earth metal, an earth metal or with a transition metal and the anion is an island, cyclic, group, chain, ribbon, laminar or matrix silicate or a combination thereof to a binder of an electrophotographic toner or developer or of an electret material.

2) (Cancelled)

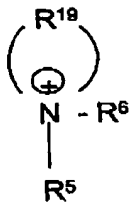
3) (Cancelled)

4) (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the low molecular weight organic cation is a substituted, phosphonium, thionium or triphenylcarbonium ion or a cationic metal complex.

5) (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the low molecular weight organic cation is an ammonium ion having one of the formulae (a) - (j)



(a)



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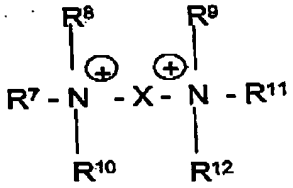

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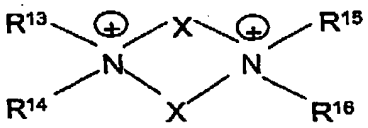

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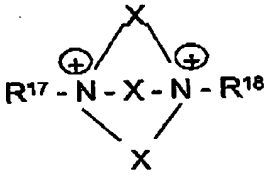

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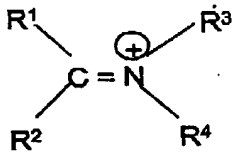

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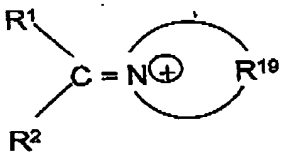

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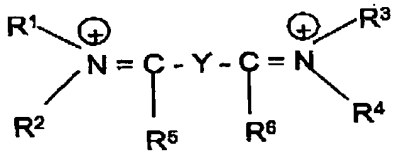

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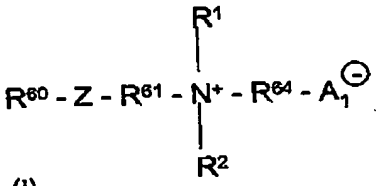
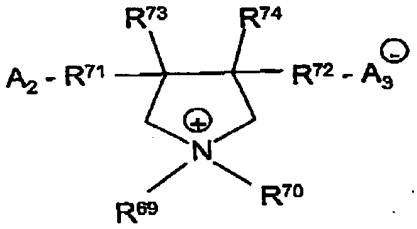


(I)

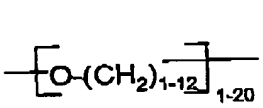
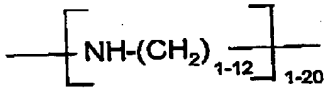


(j)

in which

R^1 to R^{18} are identical or different and represent hydrogen, CN, $(CH_2)_{1-18}CN$, halogen, branched or unbranched C_1-C_{32}-alkyl, mono- or polyunsaturated C_2-C_{32}-alkenyl, C_1-C_{22}-alkoxy, C_1-C_{22}-hydroxyalkyl, C_1-C_{22}-halogenoalkyl, C_2-C_{22}-halogenoalkenyl, C_1-C_{22}-aminoalkyl, $(C_1$-$C_{12})$-trialkyl-ammonium-$(C_1$-$C_{22})$-alkyl; $(C_1$-$C_{22})$-alkylene-(C=O)O-$(C_1$-$C_{32})$alkyl, $(C_1$-$C_{22})$-alkylene-(C=O)O-aryl, $(C_1$-$C_{22})$-alkylene-(C=O)NH-$(C_1$-$C_{32})$alkyl, $(C_1$-$C_{22})$-alkylene-(C=O)NH-aryl, $(C_1$-$C_{22})$-alkylene-O(CO)-$(C_1$-$C_{32})$alkyl, $(C_1$-$C_{22})$-alkylene-O(CO)aryl, $(C_1$-$C_{22})$-alkylene-NH(C=O)-$(C_1$-$C_{32})$alkyl, or $(C_1$-$C_{22})$-alkylene-NHCO-aryl,

wherein

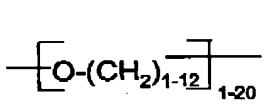
 or  ,

are optionally inserted into the acid ester or acid amide bonds;

$[(C_1$-$C_{12})$-alkylene-O-$]_{1-100}$-H; aryl, $(C_1$-$C_{18})$-alkylenearyl; $-(O\text{-}SiR'_2)_{1-32}$-O-$SiR'_3$, in which R' has the meaning C_1-C_{12}-alkyl, phenyl, benzyl or C_1-C_{12}-alkoxy; heterocyclyl, or C_1-C_{18}-alkylene-heterocyclyl, wherein the aryl and heterocyclyl radicals are optionally mono- or polysubstituted on carbon atoms or heteroatoms by C_1-C_{12}-alkyl, C_1-C_4-alkenyl, C_1-C_4-alkoxy, hydroxy-$(C_1$-$C_4)$alkyl, amino-$(C_1$-$C_4)$alkyl, C_1-C_4-alkylimino, carboxyl, hydroxyl, amino, nitro, cyano, halogen, C_1-C_{12}-acyl, C_1-C_4-halogenoalkyl, C_1-C_4-alkylcarbonyl, C_1-C_4-alkylcarbonyloxy, C_1-C_4-alkoxycarbonyl, C_1-C_4-alkylaminocarbonyl, C_1-C_4-alkylcarbonylimino, C_6-C_{10}-arylcarbonyl, aminocarbonyl, aminosulfonyl, C_1-C_4-alkylaminosulfonyl, phenyl, naphthyl, or heteroaryl;

R^{19} represents C_4-C_{11}-alkylene, $-(C_2H_4-O-)_{1-17}-(CH_2)_{1-2}-$, $-(C_2H_4-NR-)_{1-17}$ or $-(CH_2)_{1-2}-$, in which R is hydrogen or C_1-C_{12}-alkyl;

X has the meaning of Y, ~~or~~ $-CO-CH_2-CO-$,



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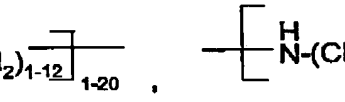

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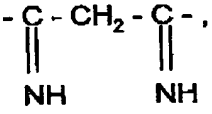

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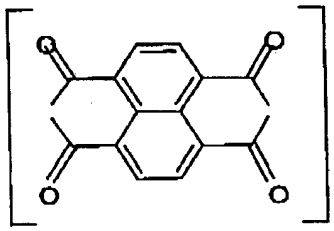

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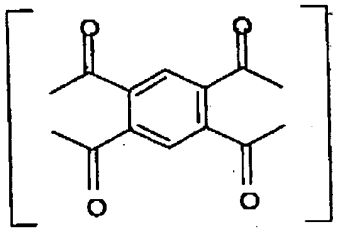

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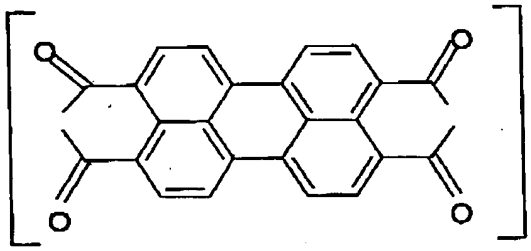
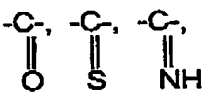
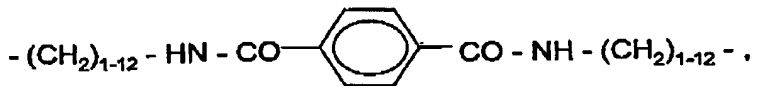


;

Y has the meaning

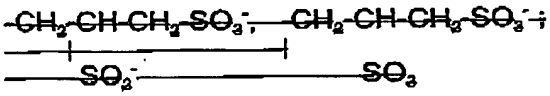


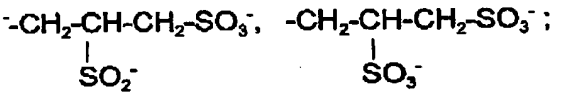
$-(CH_2)_{1-18}-$,



or o-, p-, m-(C_6-C_{14})-arylene or (C_4-C_{14})-heteroarylene with 1, 2, 3 or 4 heteroatoms selected from the group consisting of N, O, S and a combination thereof;

R^{60} represents C_1-C_{32}-acyl, C_1-C_{22}-alkyl, C_2-C_{22}-alkenyl, C_1-C_{18}-alkylene-C_6-C_{10}-aryl, C_1-C_{22}-alkylene-heterocyclyl, C_6-C_{10}-aryl or (C_4-C_{14})-heteroaryl with 1, 2, 3 or 4 heteroatoms selected from the group consisting of N, O, S, and a combination thereof;
R^{61} and R^{64} represent -$(CH_2)_{1-18}$-, C_1-C_{12}-alkylene-C_6-C_{10}-arylene, C_6-C_{10}-arylene, or C_0-C_{12}-alkylene-heterocyclyl;
Z represents -NH- or -O- ;
A_1^- and A_3^- represent -COO^-, -SO_3^-, -OSO_3^-, -SO_2^-, -COS^- or -CS_2^-;
A_2 represents -SO_2Na, -SO_3Na, -SO_2H, -SO_3H or hydrogen;
R^{69} and R^{70} independently of one another represent hydrogen, C_1-C_{32}-alkyl, in which the alkyl chain optionally contain one or more of the groups selected from the group consisting of -NH-CO-, -CO-NH-, -CO-O-, ~~or~~ -O-CO-; C_1-C_{18}-alkylene-aryl, C_0-C_{18}-alkylene-heterocyclyl, C_1-C_{18}-hydroxyalkyl, C_1-C_{18}-halogenoalkyl, aryl, -$(CH_2)_3$-SO_3^-, or





R[71] and R[72] represent -$(CH_2)_{1-12}$-; and
R[73] and R[74] represent hydrogen or C_1-C_{22}-alkyl.

6) (Original) The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein R[1] to R[18] denote hydrogen CN, CH_2-CN, CF_3, C_1-C_{22}-alkyl, C_2-C_{18}-alkenyl, C_1-C_{18}-alkoxy, C_1-C_{18}-hydroxy-alkyl, C_1-C_{18}-halogenoalkyl, C_2-C_{18}-halogenoalkenyl, C_1-C_{18}-aminoalkyl, (C_1-C_6)-trialkylammonium-(C_1-C_{18})-alkyl, (C_1-C_{18})-alkylene-O(C=O)-(C_1-C_{22})alkyl, (C_1-C_{18})-alkylene-O(C=O)-phenyl, (C_1-C_{18})-alkylene-NHCO-(C_1-C_{22})alkyl, (C_1-C_{18})-alkylene-NHCO-phenyl, (C_1-C_{18})-alkylene-(C=O)O-(C_1-C_{22})alkyl, (C_1-C_{18})-alkylene-(C=O)O-phenyl, (C_1-C_{18})alkylene-(C=O)NH-(C_1-C_{22})alkyl, (C_1-C_{18})-alkylene-CONH-phenyl, benzyl, phenyl, naphthyl, C_1-C_{12}-alkylene-heterocyclyl;
R[19] denotes C_4-C_5-alkylene, -$(C_2H_4$-$O)_{1-9}$-$(CH_2)_{1-2}$- or -$(C_2H_4$-$NH)_{1-9}$-$(CH_2)_{1-2}$-;
R[60] denotes C_1-C_{18}-acyl, C_1-C_{18}-alkyl, C_2-C_{18}-alkenyl, C_1-C_{12}-alkylene-phenyl, C_1-C_{18}-alkylene-pyridyl, phenyl or pyridyl;
R[61] and R[64] denote -$(CH_2)_{1-12}$-, C_1-C_8-alkylene-phenylene, phenylene or C_1-C_8-alkylenepyridylene or piperidylene;
R[71] and R[72] denote -$(CH_2)_{1-8}$ and
R[73] and R[74] denote hydrogen or (C_1-C_{18})-alkyl.

7) (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the low molecular weight organic cation is an ammonium ion which is an aliphatic or aromatic 5- to 12-membered heterocyclic radical with 1 to 4 atoms selected from the group consisting of N, O and S, or a combination thereof, belonging to the rings.

8) (Original) The method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the heterocyclic radical is pyridinium, pyridazinium, pyrimidinium, pyrazinium, purinium, tetraazaporphyrinium, piperidinium, morpholinium, tetrazonium, triaza-cyclononanium or tetraaza-cyclododecanium.

9) (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 4, wherein the cationic metal complex is a metal carboxylate, metal salicylate, metal sulfonate, 1:1 metal-azo complex or a metal dithiocarbamate.

10) (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein the metal is selected from the group consisting of Al, Mg, Ca, Sr, Ba, TiO, VO, Cr, V, Ti, Zr, Sc, Mn, Fe, Co, Ni, Cu, Zn and ZrO.

11) through 16) (Cancelled)

17) (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein the metal is selected from the group consisting of Al, Mg, Ca, Sr, Ba, TiO, VO, Cr, V, Ti, Zr, Sc, Mn, Fe, Co, Ni, Cu, Zn and ZrO, and the metal complex contains one or more further ligands.

18) through 21) (Cancelled)

22) (Previously Presented) A method of imparting, controlling or improving the charge of an electrophotographic toner or developer, or an electret material comprising the step of adding a charge control agent to a binder of an

electrophotographic toner or developer or of an electret material, wherein the charge control agent is distearyldimethyl ammonium bentonite.

23) (Previously Presented) A method of imparting, controlling or improving the charge of an electrophotographic toner or developer, or an electret material, comprising the step of adding as a charge control agent a structured silicate salt wherein the cation is a low molecular weight organic cation or a combination of a low molecular weight organic cation with NH_4^+, H_3O^+, an alkali metal, an alkaline earth metal, an earth metal or with a transition metal and the anion is an island, cyclic, group, chain, ribbon, laminar or matrix silicate or a combination thereof to a binder of an electrophotographic toner or developer or of an electret material, wherein the charge control agent imparts either a positive or negative charge.

24. (New) The method as claimed in claim 7, where 2 to 8 rings are fused.